

## SDOH Community Influencer Program

*Building and maintaining trust and legitimacy with the communities we serve is paramount for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the success of its Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Strategy. Community members should be recognized as essential partners in the development of programs and policies and offered meaningful and accessible opportunities to provide input.*

### A. CONTEXT

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

Inequalities in health outcomes in Michigan, and throughout the United States, are significant, persistent, and have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Social and economic conditions, including poverty, income and wealth inequality, racism, and an unsafe environment continue to drive health disparities. When it comes to health, many people in Michigan face significant barriers. These barriers, including limited access to healthy food, unsafe housing, or lack of transportation, can impact a person's ability to make healthy decisions and affect our overall health.

These differences in health outcomes emerge and persist due to policies, practices, and systems that have disadvantaged people and communities for decades. Long-standing discrimination and the unjust distribution of health promoting factors, including income, healthy housing, and food security perpetuate economic and social inequities.

As part of the MDHHS SDOH Strategy, we continue to explore innovative approaches to address barriers and advance health equity by strengthening our relationships with communities through engagement. One approach includes utilizing **community influencers** to provide input on social and health initiatives and promote available resources to support positive health outcomes.

**Community influencers** are members of self-selected social groups who have the trust and respect of their peers. They come from all walks of life and build their followings through shared passions and authentic connections. Community influencers are powerful advocates.

## B. PURPOSE

The SDOH Community Influencer Program will bring together a diverse group of community members to inform the MDHHS SDOH Strategy, as well as policy and program recommendations. It aims to improve awareness and access to resources to support positive social determinants of health.

## C. APPROACH

The MDHHS SDOH Strategy Team leveraged existing literature and input from experts in community-based participatory research and feedback loops to design a Community Influencer framework consisting of three phases:

- 1) **Listen:** Solicit large-scale, low-burden feedback from Community Influencers through brief questionnaires/surveys, meetings, and community events.
- 2) **Reflect:** Review and interpret feedback from the listening phase to inform community-driven solutions.
- 3) **Act:** Integrate feedback and close the loop with Community Influencers about how their input was used.

### Timeline:

1. Listen (4-6 months) - Summer/Fall 2023
2. Reflect (2-3 months) - Fall 2023
3. Act (6-8 months) - Winter/Spring 2024

## D. PRIORITIES

- **Health Equity and Health Disparities:** Addressing health disparities and promoting health equity should be a top priority of the program. This involves focusing on communities that have historically faced marginalization and ensuring that the perspectives of vulnerable populations are prioritized throughout the program's activities.
- **Community Engagement and Input:** The program should prioritize community engagement and input at every stage. This includes actively soliciting feedback, ideas, and experiences from community influencers to inform the MDHHS SDOH Strategy, policy recommendations, and program development.
- **Resource Awareness and Access:** Improving awareness and access to resources that support positive social determinants of health should be a core priority. Community influencers can play a crucial role in promoting and disseminating information about available resources to their peers, ensuring that individuals have the necessary support to address social determinants of health.

- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Fostering collaboration and partnerships with community-based organizations, non-profits, local health departments, and other stakeholders is essential. By working together, the program can leverage existing networks and resources to enhance its impact and reach.
- **Diversity and Representation:** The program should prioritize recruiting and engaging a diverse group of community influencers that represent the diversity of Michigan communities. This includes individuals from different ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as individuals who have experienced social determinants of health challenges firsthand.
- **Policy and Program Development:** Informing the MDHHS SDOH Strategy, policy recommendations, and program development should be a key focus. The program should actively involve community influencers in shaping and refining policies and programs to ensure they are responsive to the needs and priorities of the communities they serve.
- **Continuous Improvement and Evaluation:** The program should prioritize continuous improvement and evaluation. Regularly assessing the program's effectiveness, gathering feedback from community influencers, and making necessary adjustments based on lessons learned are crucial for achieving meaningful outcomes and maintaining community trust.

## E. MEMBERSHIP

SDOH Community Influencers are a diverse group of individuals who contribute to more equitable health outcomes through their lived experience. These individuals, as individuals who have persisted through SDOH challenges, will inform the overall MDHHS SDOH Strategy as well as specific programs and policies.

Membership is expected to include 50 individuals across Michigan (5 members per region), representing the following populations or communities:

- a. Children and infants
- b. Youth in foster care, or aging out of foster care
- c. People who are pregnant and parenting
- d. Older adults
- e. People with physical and/or mental disabilities
- f. LGBTQ+
- g. People experiencing homelessness
- h. Immigrants and migrant workers
- i. Refugees
- j. Justice-involved people
- k. People with lower incomes
- l. People with behavioral addictions or disorders
- m. People from racial and/or ethnic minority groups

- n. Tribal communities
- o. Residents in geographic areas that have been underserved by health and social services
- p. Veterans
- q. People with chronic disease(s)

## F. ACTIVITIES

Phase 1: Listen (4 months)		
Activity	Timeline	Outcomes
Develop a brief questionnaire/survey to select community influencers based on rubric.	5/1/23-5/15/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A diverse group of community influencers recruited and engaged in the program.</li><li>• Valuable feedback gathered from community influencers to inform the SDOH Strategy Team's decision-making process.</li><li>• Identification of common themes and areas of focus for improving social determinants of health.</li></ul>
Finalize rubric to score the questionnaire/survey	5/10/23-5/20/23	
Identify and recruit potential community influencers through existing SDOH subcommittees, the SDOH Newsletter, and social media	5/23/23-6/23/23	
Create a welcome email and send it out to all selected community influencers.	7/23/23-8/23/23	
Create a regular scheduled cadence to check in with community influencers via e-mail. This will include surveys for the community influencer to provide feedback from the different SDOH program areas, (CIE, CHWs, Accelerator plan, Food, Housing, etc.)	8/25/23	
Host Regional Orientation Meetings	9/01/23-9/15/23	
Conduct virtual focus groups or meetings as needed.	ongoing	
Compile and analyze feedback to identify common themes and areas of focus.	ongoing	
Phase 2: Reflect (2 months)		
Review and interpret feedback from the listen phase to identify potential community-driven solutions.	10/10/23-11/15/23	

Collaborate with community influencers and partner organizations to refine and prioritize potential solutions.	11/1/23-11/15/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Community-driven solutions identified and prioritized.</li><li>Collaborative relationships between the SDOH Strategy Team, community influencers, and partner organizations.</li></ul>
Share feedback with the SDOH Strategy Team for review and consideration in the development of programs and policies.	11/15/23-12/15/23	
Develop a plan for implementing solutions and identify necessary resources.	12/15/23-12/30/23	
Phase 3: Act (6 months)		
Implement solutions in partnership with community influencers, SDOH team, and partner organizations.	12/1/23-2/1/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Solutions implemented to improve social determinants of health and health equity.</li><li>Evaluation conducted to assess effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.</li><li>Continued engagement with community influencers to maintain relationships and ensure ongoing feedback and input.</li></ul>
Regularly communicate progress and outcomes to community influencers.	ongoing	
Conduct evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the solutions and identify areas for improvement.	2/1/24-4/1/24	
Close the loop with community influencers by sharing how their input was used to inform programs and policies.	4/1/24-5/30/24	
Host a year end special event for Community Influencers	6/1/24	

## G. COMPENSATION POLICY

Compensation Plan	Orientation Attendance	Monthly Compensation per Influencer
	\$100	\$75

Both compensation plans offer a monthly compensation of \$75 per influencer with an additional \$100 for attending an in-person orientation session.

### Influencers will be compensated for the completion of:

- One hour every other month for a meeting or focus group
- Filling out two surveys per month
- Sharing SDOH content on social media platforms 1-2 times per month
  - Purpose: The purpose of the compensation policy is to acknowledge and appreciate the significant time, effort, and expertise shared by community

influencers in the community influencer program. We will be offering compensation in the form of a check.

- Eligibility: All actively participating community influencers who meet the program's requirements and have provided meaningful input are eligible for compensation. Eligibility criteria may include attending meetings, number of completed surveys/questionnaires, participating in events, and actively engaging in program activities. Compensation is standard in exchange for a community member's time and expertise. Michigan residents over the age of 18 years of age are eligible; additional eligibility guidance is provided below.
  - i) MDHHS employee or contractors are NOT eligible as well as individuals who are already receiving compensation from their organization/company to participate in these efforts within the scope of their role.
  - ii) Community members must attend meeting and complete W-9 to receive a stipend.
  - iii) Additionally, participants should be informed before participation that all compensation can be considered as taxable income from the IRS and that MDHHS cannot provide tax assistance.

## H. RECRUITMENT

A detailed recruitment plan for the community influencer program is outlined below. This plan focuses on incentivizing and retaining community influencers while ensuring representation from diverse Michigan communities, particularly prioritizing the perspectives of vulnerable populations:

### 1. Identify Target Communities:

- Split the state of Michigan up into ten regions based on location.
- Prioritize communities that have been historically marginalized or underserved.

### 2. Develop Recruitment Materials:

- Create engaging and culturally sensitive recruitment materials, including brochures, social media posts, and videos, highlighting the purpose and benefits of the program.
- Emphasize the importance of community influencers' voices and lived experiences in shaping the MDHHS SDOH policies and programs.

### 3. Outreach and Partnerships:

- Collaborate with community-based organizations, non-profits, local health departments, and other stakeholders working in the identified communities.
- Leverage existing relationships, subcommittees, and networks to disseminate recruitment materials and reach potential community influencers.

- Conduct virtual and in-person informational presentations in community centers, faith-based organizations, and other community gathering places to introduce the program and answer questions.

#### 4. Incentives and Recognition:

- Offer compensation in the form of a check to community influencers to encourage participation.
- Establish a recognition platform on the SDOH website to showcase the impact and success stories of community influencers.

#### 5. Tailored Engagement Strategies:

- Recognize the diversity within the target communities and develop tailored strategies to engage potential community influencers from different backgrounds.
- Utilize culturally relevant messaging and materials to ensure inclusivity and foster trust among diverse populations.

#### 6. Mentorship and Support:

- The SDOH team will meet regularly with community influencers to provide guidance, support, and foster a sense of belonging.
- Offer training sessions, workshops, or webinars on topics such as effective advocacy, public speaking, and community engagement.
- Create an account on the band app or other online community for community influencers to connect, share experiences, and provide mutual support.

#### 7. Ongoing Engagement and Retention:

- Regularly communicate with community influencers to keep them informed about program updates, policy discussions, and opportunities for involvement.
- Conduct periodic check-ins and surveys to gather feedback and address any concerns or challenges.
- Offer an end of year event to celebrate the accomplishments of the community influencers of their work.
- Continuously evaluate and improve the program based on the feedback from community influencers.